

Dear Committee Chair and Members of the Public Health Committee

I OPPOSE H.B. No. 5397 AN ACT DECLARING GUN VIOLENCE A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND ADVISORY COUNCIL ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

I OPPOSE S.B. No. 477 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC HEALTH OF RESIDENTS OF THE STATE

I OPPOSE these bills because they simply create more government bureaucracy that will not reduce criminal firearm use and will not make residents safer. Consider the following areas where the state has failed to properly implement important gun crime reduction measures

- The state has not funded the Gun Trafficking Task Force for many years
- CT gun control laws are not prosecuted 60% - 83% of the time
- The Firearm Safety Training provisions of Ethan's Law have not been implemented
- The state of CT's management of firearm background checks is an administrative debacle, often requiring licensed gun dealers hours just to get someone to answer the phone. It's hard to accept that such a system is effective.

Further, by using the term "gun violence", people fail to differentiate between responsible gun ownership and criminal firearm use, leading to more ineffective measures. Further, calling gun crime a public health crisis is simply a fallacy. Gun crimes should be addressed like other criminal activity.

Therefore I ask you to avoid political pressure and vote against these bills. Instead, work to correct the above shortcomings that will reduce gun crime and insure more responsible firearm use.

Regards

Gerald (Jerry) Richard

Resident of Deep River, CT 06417